

LONDONS Remembrancer :  
OR, A  
**SERMON**

Preached at the CHURCH of  
St. *M A R T L E B O W*,

O N

September the 3d 1688.

(The Second Day being the Lord's Day) which  
was appointed by Act of PARLIAMENT for the  
CITIZENS of LONDON, and their Suc-  
cessors to retain the Memorial of the sad Desolation of  
that CITY by FIRE in the Year of our LORD  
1666.

By *WILLIAM GEARING*, Rector of  
*Christ-Church in Surrey.*

L O N D O N  
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Licensed,

September 10th 1688.

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To the Right Honourable Sir JOHN  
EYLES, Kt. LORD MAYOR  
of the CITY of LONDON.

My Lord!

**G**OD hath inflicted many Judgments upon this great City, and kindled many Dreadful Fires among us, which have at several times overthrown and consumed many Thousand Dwellings, and yet most People are regardless of this Judgment.

There be three Duties to be done in respect of God's Judgments.

1. *When they fall out, there must be special Notice taken of them: They must be observed, Marked, and Commented upon both in our Meditations and Conferences, Psalm 9. 16. The Lord is known by the Judgments which He executeth, or the Lord maketh Himself known by His Judgments, what a Just and Powerful God He is. God complains of some, Isa. 5. 12. That they regard not the Work of the Lord, nor consider the Operation of His Hands. And Psalm 64. 9. All Men shall fear, and declare the Works of God, for they shall wisely consider of His doings.*

2. *God's Works of Justice must be magnified, and God magnified in them. Job 35. Remember that thou magnifie His Work which Men behold. Every Man may see it, and behold it afar off. It is one thing to see God's Work which a Man cannot avoid if his Eyes be open; another thing so as to see and agnize God's Greatness in them; so as to cry out, as Moses and the Children of Israel did, when God drowned Pharaoh and his Host in the Red Sea, Exod. 15. 11. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord among the Gods, glorious in Holiness, fearful in Praises, and in doing Wonders? We must observe and glorifie the Justice of God, especially considering how His Judgments are many times futable to Mens Sins.*

3. *God's Works of Justice must be remembered, Psalm 111. 4. He hath made His wonderful Works to be remembered: Therefore we ought always to keep them in mind, Remember Lot's Wife, &c.*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*Obj.* But is it not an easie thing to remember any strange Judgment, that a Man hath tasted of, seen, or heard of. Who is there that doth not remember such things?

*Resp.* The Remembrance that God calls for, is not a bare Historical Remembrance, It is common and easie enough to remember the Story of Lot's Wife, or any other on whom God's Judgments have been Executed. The Remembrance that is required of us is an Operative and Practicall Remembrance, so to remember them as to be warned by them, and to take heed of the same or such like Sins as such Judgments came for, so to remember them as to be quickned to the Fear of God, and to Obedience to His Precepts, and to glorifie His Name in His fiery Dispensations towards us. God hath not wrought such great things in the World, whether respecting Persons or Nations, nor kindled so many Fires in this City, that we should write them upon the Water, or in the Sand, which the next blast of Wind defaceth and blows out: But He hath made such wonderful Works of His to be remembered. He will have them written in Brass as it were with the Pen of Iron, and the Point of a Diamond: And indeed all God's Works are so made, that they are worthy to be remembered by us.

My Lord, I humbly dedicate this ensuing Sermon to Your Lordship, and present it to the touch and test of Your Judgment. My utmost Ambition in this mean Tender is no more than that Persians was, who having nothing to present the King Artaxerxes with, ran to the River and brought him his handfull of Water. I hope this poor Present shall find acceptance with You, and that my good Intentions stamped upon it, may advance the Price of it, as the poor Widows Charitable Mind in the Gospel did raise the Value of her Mite: The Lord Direct and Assist You in all Your weighty Affairs in the Government of the City: And so recommending You to the Rich Grace of God, I humbly take my leave, and remain,

September 13.  
1688.

Your Lordships in all Gospel-Services  
to be Commanded,

WILLIAM GEARING.



LONDONS Remembrancer,  
OR, A  
SERMON

Preached at the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow,  
On the 3d of September, 1688.

Isaiah xxiv. 15.

*Wherefore glorifie ye the Lord in the Fires,  
even the Name of the Lord God of Israel  
in the Isles of the Sea.*

**I**N the former part of this Chapter ye have the Description of a terrible consuming Judgment, *'Behold the Lord maketh the Earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the Inhabitants thereof.*

The Effects here spoken of are like those that follow a Terrible Fire; they make the Earth empty, overturn Houses, and scatter abroad the Inhabitants driven out of  
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their Habitations : The Prophet shews that this Judgment should make no difference in regard of any outward Estate or Condition of Men, namely, in reference to their outward Conditions. The Judgments of God look upon all alike ; therefore saith the Prophet, *verse 2.* It shall be, *As with the People, so with the Priest ; as with the Servant, so with his Master ; as with the Maid, so with her Mistress ; as with the Buyer, so with the Seller ; as with the Lender, so with the Borrower ; as with the taker of Usury, so with the giver of Usury to him :* They shall be all wrapt up in one bundle of Judgments without discrimination.

Then the Prophet goes on to describe the Consequents of it, *verse 3.* *The Land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled, for the Lord hath spoken this word. The Earth mourneth, and fadeth away, the haughty People of the Earth do languish :* And so on to the end of the Twelfth Verse.

But now, though the Judgments of God go thus forth, and consume all sorts alike who be alike in their Sins, yet the Lord knows how to make a difference, and in the most common Calamities he usually hath a Reserve : But the Reserve is made, not upon any outward Consideration, but the difference is in reference to the Spiritual Estate and Internal Condition of Man. Therefore he saith in the Thirteenth Verse, *When thus it shall be in the midst of the Land among the People, there shall be as the shaking of an Olive Tree, and as the gleaning of Grapes when the Vintage is done. They shall lift up their Voice, they shall sing for the Majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the Sea.* That is, there are some, though possibly they may be much afflicted, and in great distress, yet their Comforts shall not be quite removed. It shall be with them as is expressed, *verse 8.* *The Mirth of Tabrets ceaseth,*  
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*the noise of them that rejoyce endeth, the joy of the Harp ceaseth. They shall not drink Wine with a Song; strong Drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. That is, all their Joy and Mirth shall come to an end. But these shall lift up their Voice, and sing for the Majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the Sea.* Now upon this difference of God's Dispensation, the Prophet groundeth an exhortation in the words of my Text; *Wherefore glorifie ye the Lord in the Fires, even the Name of the Lord God of Israel in the Isles of the Sea.* Here was the Description of the Judgment, which like Fire had consumed all. Here were some that were spared, and they lifted up their Voice, and cryed unto others, *Wherefore glorifie ye God in the Fires, &c.* So that the Words are an Exhortation to an Holy and Gracious improvement of the Judgment of God that was upon them, *Wherefore glorifie ye God, &c.*

Here it will be needful to open two things.

1. What is meant by glorifying of God.
2. What is here meant by these Fires in my Text.

To glorifie God, understand it first Negatively, What it is not. It is not to be understood, as if it were to make God glorious, for God was glorious from Everlasting: When we glorifie Him we do not begin to make Him glorious. They that were obscure among Men, by Honour and Glory put upon them may begin to be glorified, but God's Glory was with Him from Everlasting. He is Infinitely Glorious in Himself, and so no Addition can be made to Him that is Infinite in Glory: Our glorifying of Him is not the adding any thing to the Glory

which God had, it is not the heaping up any farther Glory upon Him than what He had before, for His Glory is Infinite; and that is Infinite to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. The greatest Glory on Earth is that of a Mighty Monarch, when he appeareth in State, his Robes Glorious, his Attendants Glorious, when every thing about him is ordered to be as glorious as may be (the Scripture speaks of *Solomon in all his Glory*, *Matth. 6.*) I grant there is no proportion here, for what proportion is there between that which is Finite, and that which is Infinite? But because we know no higher, it is the best resemblance we have, whereby we take some scantling of the Infinite Glory of our Heavenly King. Therefore the Scriptures speak of it to us according to our Capacity. *Psal. 93.* 1. *The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious Apparel; the Lord reigneth, he is clothed with Majesty.*— O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious, Thou art clothed with Majesty and Honour, *Psal. 104.* But (as I said before) it holdeth no proportion. So that we may not unfitly take up our Apostles Words elsewhere, (though spoken to another purpose) *2 Cor. 3. 10.* *Even that which is most glorious here, hath no Glory in this respect, by reason of the Glory that excelleth.* And the force of the Argument he useth at the next Verse there, holdeth full out as strongly here: For, saith he, *If that which is done away be glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.* The Glory of the Mightiest Prince in the World when it is at the fullest is but *ἡξία*, a matter rather of shew and Opinion than of Substance, and hath in it more of Fancy than Reality, (*μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, is St. Luke's Expression, *Acts 25. 23.*) yet as empty a thing as it is, if it were of any

any permanency, it were more worthy to be regarded; but that which makes it the more vain, is, that it is a thing so transitory, it shall and must be done away. But the Glory of the Great King of Heaven abideth, and shall not (cannot) be done away for ever. *Psalm 104. 31. The glorious Majesty of the Lord endureth for ever.* If then that be glorious, then this much more.

And as no other thing belongeth so properly to God as Glory, so neither doth Glory belong so properly to any other Person, as to God. The Holy Martyr St. Stephen therefore calleth him, *Acts 7. 2. The God of Glory*: And the Holy Apostles, when they speak of giving him Glory, do it sometimes with the Exclusive Particle, *μονῶς σολῶ Θεῷ*, to the onely Wise God, or as the Words will equally bear it, (saith Bishop Sanderson) *Onely to the Wise God be Glory; to Him, and onely to Him, yea, and the Holy Angels*: In that Anthem they sang upon our Saviour's Birth, when they shared Heaven and Earth their several Portions, allotted us our Part in peace, and the good Will of God, but with Reservation of the whole Glory to Him, *Luk. 2. 14. Glory be to God on high, and in Earth Peace, and towards Men good Will.* It is well for us if we may enjoy our own Peace, and His good Will; (for it is but little that we have deserved either of both;) but let us beware how we meddle with His Glory, for He is most jealous of that Divine, Infinite, Incomprehensible Glory that belongeth to Him as Supream King of Kings, as His peculiar Prerogative, and the choicest Flower in His Crown, in that He will bear no sharer; for He hath expressly told us, *My Glory will I not give to another, Isa. 42. 8.*

*Tibi Domine, tibi  
maneat Gloria illibata,  
mecum bene agitur, si  
pacem habuero. Bern.  
in Cantic. Serm. 13.*

One would think, that by the form of the Verb in the Exhortation, that God looketh for some Glory from us: for what else is it to glorifie, but to make one glorious by conferring some Glory upon him which he had not, (or not in that degree) before. And how can that be done to God, whose Glory is Perfect, Essential, and Infinite: And unto what is Perfect, much less to what is Infinite, nothing can be added. What one that had *Virgil* in great Veneration, said of him, (*Tanta Maronis Gloria, ut nullius laudibus crescat, nullius vituperatione minuitur*) was but a flaunting *Hyperbole*, far beyond the Merit of the Party he meant it to. But the like Speech would be most exquisitely true of God, (a *melons* rather than an *Hyperbole*, as a Learned Man noteth,) for God's Glory is truly such, as all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth, should they joyn their whole Forces to do it, could not make it either more or less than it is. We must therefore be constrained to forsake the proper signification of the Word Glorifie, which is to add some Glory to another, either in kind, or in degree, which before he had not; and understand it in such a Sence, as that the thing meant thereby may be feasible.

So then, when we are exhorted to glorifie God affirmatively, it is to manifest the Glory that God hath, or to declare and shew how glorious God is. Now when we glorifie God, we do but shew forth his Glory. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work, Psalm 19. 1.* And thus the Angels and Saints in Heaven declare His Glory: And thus all His People on Earth declare His Glory. The Heavens declare His Glory Naturally, and Saints declare His  
Glory



Glory Spiritually : They shew forth His Glory, and do manifest to their own Consciences, and to the World, how highly they prize and esteem His Glory, and how earnestly they desire, and as much as in them lieth, endeavour it, that all other Men would also with them acknowledge and admire the same ; *Sing Praise to the Honour of His Name, make His Praise to be glorious, Psalm 66. 1.* The Prophet doth not say, make His Essence to be more glorious than it is in it self, but make His Praise to be more and more glorious in the Eye and Esteem of Men ; *Psalm 145. 11, 12. That Men may speak of the Glory of His Kingdom, and talk of His Power : And make known to the Sons of Men His Mighty Acts, and the glorious Majesty of His Kingdom. So Psalm 96. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8. Sing unto the Lord, Bless His Name, shew forth His Salvation from day to day: Declare His Glory among the Heathen, His Wonders among all People. Honour and Majesty are before Him ; Strength and Beauty are in His Sanctuary. Give unto the Lord (O ye Kindreds of the People) give unto the Lord Glory and Strength : Give unto the Lord the Glory due unto His Name.* When we endeavour by our Thanksgivings, Confessions, Faith, Obedience, and Good Works, to bring God's true Religion and Worship into request, to win a due Reverence to His Holy Name and Word, to beget in others more High and Honourable Thoughts concerning God in all these His most Eminent Attributes of Wisdom, Power, Justice, Mercy, &c. This is according to Scripture Language to glorifie God.

1. To glorifie God supposeth that we know what a God He is, a God full of all Perfection, a God glorious in Holyness, glorious in Majesty and Power ; otherwise

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*Dominum magnificat, qui Domini magnificentiam predicat. Euseb. Emili. hom 6.*



we cannot give Him Glory, no more than a Blind Man can praise super-eminent Beauty or Excellent Colours.

2. It supposeth that there be an inward Delight in His glorious Excellencies.

3. Then will follow an outward testifying and acknowledging of His Excellencies, declaring what a God of Glory He is. We do not by shewing forth His Glory increase His Glory : We add not Light to the Sun, when we praise and commend the Lustre of it. God's Excellencies are His Praise ; our Acknowledgment makes this His Praise glorious. A Man would think the glorious Angels and Saints in Heaven were fitter Instruments for such an Employment, than such poor Worms of the Earth as we are. It is confessed, they in Heaven are fitter to do it, and there it is best done, but it is more needful to be done here upon Earth ; and if it be sincerely done here ; it is very acceptable unto God. It is not so much the thing done that God regardeth, as the performance of it in singleness of Heart : Let that be set right first, and then be the performance what it will, we both Please and Honour God therewith. *Who so offereth Praise, glorifieth me*, saith the Lord, (*Psal.* 50. 23.) That is, so He intendeth it, and so I accept it. Wherefore the Glory of God, the setting forth of His Eminencies and Excellencies, should be the end of our Lives, and the principal thing we should aim at. We begin with it in the Lord's Prayer, *Hallowed be thy Name* : It should be our main Employment : *Of Him, and by Him are all things, to Him be Glory for ever*, (*Rom.* 11.) We should therefore give God that which is His own, *Thine is the Glory* ; as it is in the  
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Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer. When we begin, the first Petition we are to put up, is, Hallowed, or Glorified be thy Name: We are to pray that His Name may be Hallowed or Glorified: And when we have gone through all the Petitions, we are to wrap up all in the Conclusion with this Acknowledgment, that to Him alone belongeth all the Kingdom, the Power, and Glory for Ever and Ever. God's Glory must have the first place in all our Designs, Prayers, Intents, and Purposes: It is the end of all Obedience. *Matth. 5. 16. Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* This is a notable Tryal of all our dealings, and this is that which may humble the best Christians, who are too apt to respect themselves, and cannot keep their Eye directly and only upon God, and His Glory. And that we may glorify God, we must

1. Pray and Endeavour after the Knowledge of God, for without it we cannot discern the Excellency of His Name, nor in any measure sanctifie Him in our Hearts. Ignorant People have no esteem of Mens Gifts, Learning, &c. because they know them not, much less can we have a due Estimation of God's Perfections without Knowledge. God made the World and the Creatures, thereby to make Himself known for His Glory. And more clearly did He make Himself known by His Word, that He might be glorified: But they that come not to the Knowledge of God cannot glorify Him.

2. We must endeavour that in our hearts we may have a due Reverence, and Awful Admiration of the Lord's

Excellencies that we may rightly conceive of Him, and that we may discern Him in His Word, and in his Works, and rightly be affected towards Him in His Worship.

3. We must likewise in our Words endeavour to express due Reverence towards Him upon all occasions, speaking to His Praise and Glory. And

4. That all our Works and Actions may be directed to His Glory, and that in them others may discern a due Respect to His Majesty. And here let us take heed of aiming at our own Glory in God's Service, this is the way to lose a Reward from God, for herein a Man serveth himself, and not God; and therefore no marvel if the Lord deny him any Wages: Yea, herein a Man putteth himself in God's place, and therefore deserveth that Punishment which is due to such as rob Him of His Glory.

*Obj.* Oh but we are bid to let our Light shine before Men, that they may see our good Works.

*Respon.* The Words reconcile themselves. We are bid to let our Light shine before Men to this end, that seeing our good Works they may glorifie our Heavenly Father: We are bid not to do them before Men for this end, to be seen of Men.

In the second place we are to enquire what we are to understand by these Fires in my Text, *Glorifie ye the Lord in the Fires, &c.*

Fire

Fire is taken in Scripture diverse ways.

1. There is an Internal Metaphorical Fire, a Fire in the Conscience. Thus God sends an evil Conscience into many wicked Men, which is like a flaming Furnace, much worse than King *Nebuchadnezzar's* Furnace of Fire, when heated Seven times hotter than ordinary. These are the greatest of all Fires, and their burnings are the greatest scorplings, when the sparks of God's fiery Wrath and Indignation fall into it.

2. There is the Fire of Bodily Distempers. Such Fires are threatned, *Dent. 28. 22. The Lord shall smite thee with the Consumption, and the Fever, and with an Inflammation, and an extream burning.* How many Persons both young and old doth God consume by such Fires as these are?

3. The third Judgment of Fire may be taken for the Extream Heat and Burning of the Sun, such as we had in some part of this Summer. And this in Scripture is called by the Name of Fire, *Joel 1. 20. The Beasts of the Field cry unto Thee, for the Waters are dried up, and Fire hath devoured the Pastures of the Wilderness.* This Fire is only the heat of the Sun, which scorched and burnt up the Pastures of the Wilderness; and this the Prophet calls by the name of Fire. And God many times sends a blasting, by which the tender Fruits of the Earth are burnt up, which the *Latines* call by the Name of *Uredo*, that is, a burning.

4. There are extraordinary Fires, which God sometimes sends from Heaven. Such was the Fire of God that destroyed

destroyed *Job's* Sheep, (*Job* 1. 16.) which burnt up his Sheep and his Servants, and consumed them; such was that Fire that went out from the Lord, and consumed *Nadab* and *Abihu* for offering strange Fire before the Lord, (*Levit.* 10. 2.) *Elijah* procured Fire from Heaven to consume the Captains that came to apprehend him from the King, 2 *Reg.* 1. 10, 12. And it is said, *That the Lord did rain down Fire and Brimstone from the Lord out of Heaven upon Sodom to consume it*, *Gen.* 19. 24. and burnt up the Cities of the Plain. And the *Psalmist* speaking of the Plagues of Egypt, (*Psalms* 105. 32.) saith, *That the Lord sent flames of Fire in the Land.* So some Expound that place, (*Psalms* 104. 4.) *He maketh His Angels Spirits, and His Ministers a flame of Fire: i. e.* say they, He useth flames of Fire for His Ministers, for His Messengers, He sends a Fire on His Errand to do His Work. But we know, that place is applyed to the Holy Angels by the Apostle, *Heb.* 1. 7. The Fire of God which burnt up *Job's* Sheep and Servants, is conceived to have been some terrible flash of Lightning, which in a moment destroyed and consumed the Sheep and the Shepherds. And this is more probable, because it is said to fall down from Heaven, that is, out of the Air: for so often in Scripture Heaven is put for the Air, the middle Region of the Air, where Satan hath great Power, *Eph.* 2. 2. therefore he is called the Prince of the Power of Air, and he can do Mighty things, command much in that Magazine of Heaven, where the dreadful Artillery which makes Men tremble, those fiery Meteors, Thunder and Lightning are lodged. This Fire that consumed *Job's* Sheep and Servants, is called the Fire of God, not only because it was sent from God as all other Afflictions are, but it may be called

called the Fire of God because of the strangeness of it, it was a Wonderful, an Extraordinary Fire. And so it is usual in the *Hebrew* to use the Name of God as an Epithete, as an Additional Word to heighten the Excellency, Greatness, and Rareness of things. We find that Phrase often, A Man of God. The *Hebrews* say, to call one a Man of God, is as much as to say, he is an Extraordinary Man, a Man of an Excellent Spirit, a Prophet, an Holy Man, a Man inspir'd of God. In that *Psalms*, where the Church is shadowed under the similitude of a Vine, it is said, *She did send forth her Branches like the goodly Cedars*, so we translate it; It is in the Original, *She sent forth her Branches as the Cedars of God*; that is, Excellent Cedars, tall and Extraordinary Cedars. The *Psalmist* in *Psal.* 36. comparing the Love of God to great Mountains, saith, *Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains*, *Psal.* 36. 6. The word is, *like the Mountains of God*. So in *Psalms* 65. 9. *Thou visitest the Earth, and waterest it, thou greatly enrichest it with the Rivers of God*, that is, with an Excellent River: So here, the Fire of God, that is, a strange Fire, a vehement Fire, an extraordinary Fire, an unusual and unheard of Fire. Therefore the *Hebrews* call Extraordinary things the things of God, because all the Wonders and Excellencies, all the Beauty and Glory that is in Creatures, is but a foot-step and drop of that Excellency, Glory, and Power that is in God; therefore every thing that is most Excellent is ascribed unto God. This Fire being a strange and Extraordinary Fire, is said to be the Fire of God.

But here it may be demanded, why Satan chose to consume *Job's* Sheep with Fire? Why did he not rather make use of Spoilers and Robbers to take them away?

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He could have drawn the *Sabeans* to have carryed away the Flocks of Sheep, as well as the Drovers of greater Cattle, he could easily have procured them, why then doth he cause Fire from Heaven to come down, even the Fire of God to consume them?

I Answer, The Reason of it was, to make the Affliction more sharp and grievous. He would not have the Sheep to be taken away after the same manner that the Oxen and Camels were, that he might aggravate *Job's* Trouble, and stir him up to murmur against God, yea, and to blaspheme His Holy Name (for that was his Design) and thereby to beget an Opinion in God, that God was become his Enemy as well as Man. Those Afflictions are most grievous, wherein God appeareth to be against us.

It may be demanded further, Why the Sheep were consumed with Fire rather than any other of his Cattle?

Expositors answer this in two things.

1. The Sheep were used in Sacrifice, when the days of the Feasting of *Job's* Children were ended, *Job* 1. 5. *Job* offered Sacrifice, he offered Burnt-Offerings according to the Number of them all: And the Sheep chiefly were offered in Sacrifice. Now Satan by consuming the Sheep, hoped to fasten this upon *Job*, if he could possibly do it, that God was not pleased with his very Sacrifices, that He was angry with his Duties and Services. As if he should say, Dost thou think, that the offering up of thy Sheep in Sacrifice hath been acceptable unto God? Doubtless, if the Fire of those Sacrifices had been pleasing to God, if he had smelt a savour of rest in them, (as He is said to have done, when *Noah* offered Sacrifice after the Deluge,

*Gen.*



*Gen.* 18. 11.) He would never have sent a Fire from Heaven to consume them: But *Origen* brings in *Job* excellently retorting this suggestion upon Satan. I sacrificed now one, and then another of my Sheep to God, but now blessed be God, who hath accepted all my Flock as one Burnt-Offering.

Moreover *Job's* Sheep were consumed by Fire, as to make *Job* think his former services were rejected of God, so to discourage him, and take him quite off from sacrificing any more, to make him despair of ever thriving in the way of such Services, in the way of those Duties, as if he should have said, I will offer up no more Burnt-Offerings, for I shall never appease the Anger of God, nor any way benefit my self. If Satan by such prejudices as these against Holy Duties, can cause us to lay them aside, he hath vanquished us, and our Souls are left naked and unarmed. If we give over Prayer and other Duties, we have no ground to expect God's Assistance or Protection.

5. All sorts of Judgments are Fires, especially great and dreadful Judgments. Behold, saith the Lord, I will kindle a Fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree, *Ezek.* 20. 47. By Fire is meant that warlike Invasion by the *Babylonians*, who by Sword, and what accompanied it, laid all wast. And it shall devour every green Tree in thee, and every dry Tree. *Hierome* makes these to be Saints and Sinners. So some others Expound the green Tree of the Righteous, and the dry Tree of the Wicked. But (*Ezek.* 9. 4.) the Righteous mourned for all the Abominations that were in *Jerusalem*, and were marked, that they might not be destroyed.

stroyed. Therefore by Green Tree I understand the Rich and Wealthy, the Young and Lusty, the High and Mighty; and by the Dry Tree the Poor, the Aged, and Weak, and those whose Strength is exhausted. And then it followeth in that 20th Chapter of Ezekiel, *The flaming Flame shall not be quenched.* It is in the Original, *The Flame of Flame*: The doubling of the word notes the Intention of it, *a vehement Flame*, such as should continue, and by no Art, Power, or Policy be extinct; that Affliction should be wonderful, sore and lasting. The War begat Famine, Famine begat the Plague, and the Plague Death: Here was a Flame of a Flame; they strove by the *Egyptians* to quench that Fire, but could not. As a Fire doth all before it, so do the fierce Judgments of God ruine People, be they high or low, weak or strong, and dryeth up the Spirits of those that are living: So saith the Prophet, (*Lament. 4. 8.*) *Their Visage is blacker than a Coal, they are not known in the Streets, their skin cleaveth to their bones, it is withered, it is become like a stick.* When once God kindleth a Fire in His Judgments, being once begun, they cannot be staid by the Skill or Power of the Creature. The flaming Fire shall not be quenched. The *Jews* used all their Policy and Power to divert the *Babylonians* from coming against them, to remove them being come, but nothing prevailed. God's Fires are not extinguishable by the Arts, Counsels, or Forces of Men. As we cannot avoid God's Judgments threatned, so we cannot remove them being inflicted.

Every thing that is a Judgment, or an Effect of Wrath, that is a Fire: Wheresoever then is a manifestation of the Wrath of God in some sad Dispensation, in whatsoever Matter or Subject it is, it may be called a Fire. So that the

the Fires we are here to glorifie God in, are those sad Dispensations of God, of what Nature soever they are; every Judgment is a Fire, as well as Fire it self may be a Judgment. There are Fires in God's Wrath, though no flame break forth. *A Fire is kindled in His Wrath:* The Anger of God is a Fire, and there is no standing before the Wrath of God when that burneth: And we are to glorifie God in His Wrath, as well as in His Mercy.

*Quest.* Here it may be demanded, Why are the Judgments of God clothed with this Title of Fire.

Take the Answer in these four things,

*First*, From their sudden breaking forth, especially that Fire which is a Judgment, an accidental Fire, such a Fire as cometh not by blowing: It was threatned upon Wicked-Men, (*Job 20. 26.*) That *a Fire not blown shall consume him.* This circumlocation intimates more than an ordinary Fire. We ordinarily kindle Fires by blowing, but this is a Fire not blown. Many of the *Greeks* interpret this of Hell. There needs no Bellows to kindle that Fire. *The Breath of the Lord as a River of Brimstone shall kindle it. Isa. 30. ult.* *Tophet is prepared of old*, it needs no blowing to make it burn. But though the Fire of Hell may be called a Fire not blown, yet I conceive this Scripture hath no Relation to it.

*Ignis Gehennæ cum sit incorporeus, neq; studio humano succenditur, neq; lignis nutritur, sed creatus durat inextinguibilis.*

The Lord sends many Fires and Troubles in the World, that we may easily see how they come, and who were the Bellows to blow up these Fires, such as the Fires of

Discord and Contention among Brethren : By these Fires many are consumed, and it is no difficult thing to find out such Bellows. We call Men of strife *Incendiaries*, such as foment unnatural Fires, endeavouring (what in them lieth) to set Church and State on fire. It is the study of some Men to kindle fire between Party and Party, yea to make them of the same Party suspicious of one another, till all be in a flame. How vehemently hath this fire been blown in these days, and yet is blowing? And we have sometimes seen the Bellows themselves (as they well deserved it) burnt in it. *By the blessing of the Righteous* (saith Solomon) *Prov. 11. 11. The City is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked*; that is, by the contentious Words, and dividing Counsels of the Wicked. These stir the Coals, and blow up the Fire, *Prov. 29. 8. Scornful Men bring a City into a snare*, or (as the Margin expresseth it,) *Set a City on fire*. But though such Men, and their inflaming Practices are often discernable by all, yet sometimes the Fire of Contention and Trouble kindleth, whilst every one stands wondering who bloweth it. Both Nations and Persons have been ruin'd by an invisible Hand; that they are consumed they do perceive, but how, and by whom, they know not. No Man goes to blow a Fire to burn an House, except such wicked Wretches that do it on purpose. Such Fires as come suddenly, seldom can any one give an account how they are kindled. So many of God's sad Dispensations upon a Place or People, they come very suddenly and unexpectedly, they break out no Man knows how. The Heathens have taken notice of this as a great aggravation of Suffering, not to know whence their Misery came.

Secondly,

*Secondly*, Because there is a Terror in the Judgments of God, and a pain in sufferings. Fire is a terrible and a painful Element, and worketh through all. The Judgments of God are like Fire in this respect. *There is no Affliction for the present joyous, but grievous*, saith the Apostle. God sometimes sends such Judgments upon the Wicked, as shall be an astonishment and an affrightment to those that behold them. The Lord threatens the Wicked, *Deut. 28. 59. I will make thy plagues wonderful.*

*Thirdly*, Fire is a devouring Creature. In this respect the Judgments of God are compared to Fire, they are of a devouring Nature: The Sword and the Fire are devouring things. Fire is a great Eater, it hath a strong Stomach: What will not Fire digest? Even the whole Sublunary World at last shall be devoured with Fire: *The Elements shall melt with fervent heat*: Fire will digest Stones, Iron, and Adamant; such is the Anger of God, there is no standing before it, nor before the least of God's Judgments, when He commands them Execution, it shall be done. The Judgments of God have a consuming Power in them to eat out and lay waste the Wicked of the World. *Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be like straw and stubble before the Fire of God's Wrath. And the day that cometh shall burn them up, and shall leave them neither Root nor Branch, Mal. 4. 1.*

*Fourthly*, Fire is a merciless Element we say, Fire and Water have no Mercy: They are inexorable, there is no entreating them. Such is the Judgment of God upon a wicked Man; if God will strike, none shall stay his Hand.

Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before Him, yet the Sentence is irrevocable, the Fire of His Wrath must burn : Though Prayer hath often quenched the fire of God's Wrath, yet sometimes the Anger of God cannot be quenched by Prayer ; there's no intreaty to be heard , and that the fire of His Wrath may the more quietly burn, the Lord hath said, *Pray not for this People.*

*Fifibly*, The Judgments of God in reference to His own People are a fire, as they have a purging and purifying quality in them. Fire cleanseth, purgeth, and getteth out the dross. This is the Nature of God's fore Dispensations towards His People , they get out their Dross and Corruption. *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, Isa. 27.* The Vine turneth wild, and degene-

Clem. Alexand.  
Paedag.

rateth unless it be pruned, and Man proveth exorbitant, unless he be purged and cleansed in the fire of Affliction : He is apt to run out into evil ways, and is hardly reduced to a due conformity to the Will of God.

From hence this point of Instruction ariseth,

*That it is our Duty to give Glory to God in all his saddest Dispensations towards us.*

We must not only glorifie God in our green Pastures, but also glorifie God in the Fires. The Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 10. 30. Whatsoever ye do, whether you eat or drink, do all to the Glory of God.* Now I say also, whatsoever ye suffer, whether by Fire or Water, suffer all to the Glory of God. That is to glorifie God in these Fires.

The



The Life of Christ was an Active Life, and a Passive Life, and in all he glorified God. He gives that account of it when he was ready to go out of the World, (*John 17. 4.*) *Father, I have glorified Thee on Earth, and done the work Thou gavest me to do.* So whatsoever our work be in the World, whether it lye in Active or Passive Obedience, we should be able to give this account of it, that we have glorified God in it. Let us consider our answerableness to this intendment. Ye are not only to glorifie God in the Fire, whilst the Fire is burning, but glorifie Him though the Fires be put out from among you. Consider then, whether ye have done that which amounteth to your glorifying God in the Fires. What that is you may take in these particulars.

1. To glorifie God in the Fires, is to acknowledge that God was just in kindling the great Fire that consumed a great part of your City in the Year 1666, and many other Fires among you since that time. And unless the Lord hath this acknowledgment from us, we do much dishonour Him. When *Nehemiah* had related a story of God's sad Dispensations, (*Nehem. 9.*) he concludes *verse 13.* *Howbeit Thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for Thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.* Therefore if God kindle Fires among us, and consume us, yet God is just in so doing. God often makes the Punishment suitable to the Sin: And when it is so, it reneweth the memory of the Sin, and strikes the Heart with the horror of its own guiltiness. Such a Punishment is like a Cross with a Superscription upon it; as it seemeth by the Practice of *Pilate*, the manner of the *Romans* was to express the fact, of which the Party executed was accused, over his Head



at his Execution. So these Punishments are like a Cross with such a Superscription upon it, the Punishment it self doth as good as upbraid the Conscience. Thus and thus hast thou done, the Punishment puts the Party in mind of his Sin, as Samuel did Agag. *As thy Sword hath made other Women childless, so shall thy Mother be childless among Women,* 1 Sam. 15. 33.

2. To acknowledge that God is merciful, that as by our Sins we have deserved whatever the Fire hath kindled, so that we have not suffered so much as we have deserved, Ezra 9. 13. *Thou hast punished us less than our Iniquities have deserved.* It is just that we are punished, but *Thou hast punished us less than we have deserved.* We are not to understand that, as if God had punished them but a little, for under the whole Heaven God had not kindled such a Fire as in Jerusalem, yet saith he, *Thou hast punished us less than we have deserved.*

3. We glorifie God in the Fires, when we quietly and silently submit to the Fires. Some submit to the Judgments of God out of Sullenness of Spirit. This is a despising of the Judgment of God. David did never more glorifie God, nor speak His Glory louder, than when he was dumb and silent under God's Dispensation. There was no noise in his Spirit. If it came from any one else, I could not have held my Tongue, *But I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because it was Thy doing.* Christianity teacheth us to bear Losses, and endure Afflictions out of Love to God, and in Obedience to God's Command, and with Submission to His Holy Will. There are some who are of an obstinate Spirit, disdaining to bow under the Yoke, and

and (though the Rod smart never so much) to testify any submission to the Will of God, or any remorse at all. *Pharaoh* was such a one; how terribly did God lash him with a ten-stringed Whip, yet still he hardens his Heart against Him, and relenteth no more than if he had struck upon the side of a Rock. And *Ahaz* was such a one; he was branded and stigmatized for it. God for his Wickedness had delivered him up into the Hands of his Enemies, (2 Chron. 28. 22.) and they held him in Captivity and Thralldom, yet in the time of his distress he did more trespass against the Lord. *This is that King Ahaz.*

I have read of a certain Lord Chancellor of England, being far from his own House with the King, that at that time in the Moneth of *August*, part of his Dwelling House, and all his Barns (being then full of Corn) were burnt up, and consumed by a sudden Fire; his Lady certifying him of this Mishap, he answereth her Letter in this manner.

*Madam,*

**A**LL Health wished to you. I do understand that all our Barns and Corn, with some of our Neighbours likewise are wasted by Fire. An heavy and lamentable loss, (but only that it was God's Will) of such abundance of Wealth: But because it so seemed good to God, we must not only patiently, but also willingly bear and submit to the Hand of God so stretched out upon us. God gave whatsoever we lost, and seeing it hath so pleased Him to take away what He gave, His Divine Will be done: Never let us repine at this, but let us take it in good part. We are bound to be thankful as well in Adversity as in Prosperity; and if we cast up our Accounts well, this which we esteem so great a Loss, is rather a great Gain,

Gain, for what is necessary and conducing to our Salvation, is better known to God than to us. I entreat you therefore to take a good Heart, and to give thanks to God for all these things which He hath pleased to take away, as well as for all His Blessings which He hath bestowed on us, and to praise Him for that which is left. It is an easie matter with God, if He please, to augment what is left: But if He shall see good to take away more, even as it shall please Him, so let it be. I pray you, be joyful in the Lord with my Children, and all our Family: All these things, and all we, are in the Hand of the Lord; let us therefore wholly depend upon His good Will, and so no Losses shall ever hurt us.

4. Be sure of this, that you lose your Dross in the Fire. If ye can shew that any of your Dross is come out by the Fires that have been among you, ye glorifie God in the Fires. Can ye shew any Dross that these Fires have got out, the Dross of Earthliness, the Dross of Pride, of Unbelief, Inordinate Love of the Creature, Self-love, &c. Is any of this Dross got out? Ezek. 22. 18. *Son of Man, the House of Israel is to me become dross.* Though to themselves they may be pure Gold, yet (saith the Lord) to Me they are become Dross. Therefore he threatens them, verse 20. to gather them into *Jerusalem*, as Men gather Silver, Brass, and Iron, and Lead and Tin into the midst of the Furnace; to blow the Fire upon it, to melt it. So the Lord would gather them in His Anger and melt them, and blow upon them in the Fire of His Wrath, till they were melted and consumed; and this He would do, because their Dross was not purged away. St. Augustine speaks excellently to this purpose on Psalm 60. Doth the Gold shine in the Furnace of the Goldsmith? It will shine, and

and shew its lustre in a Ring, in a Chain, or Bracelet : let it suffer the crucible, that it may come out purged from its dross, to the publick view. There is the Furnace wherein is dross and Gold, and Fire at which the Goldsmith bloweth ; in this Furnace the dross is consumed, the Gold is refined ; the one is turned to Ashes, the other is cleared from all filth. The World is the Furnace, the Wicked are the Dross, the Righteous are the Gold ; Tribulation is the Fire, and God is as the Goldsmith. I do therefore what the Goldsmith will have me, where he putteth me I endure, I am commanded to bear, he knoweth best how to purge : Though the Dross burn to heat, and even consume me, yet it wasteth it self, and I am purged from my filth, because my Soul waiteth upon God.

5. Then do ye glorifie God in the Fires, when ye find your Hearts made warm and fruitful by them, what Holy warmth and fervour have ye got into your Hearts ? Have you any heat towards Spiritual things ? God often kindleth these Fires among us, to put our Hearts into a Spiritual warmth : Fire is like the Sun, that great Fire ; there is a scorching power in the Sun ; and therefore there are some that curse the Sun's rising for scorching them ; but the general effect of the Sun is to warm all, and to enliven all things. And this is the fruit of the Fire of Afflictions to warm the Hearts of God's People with Holy Thoughts and Meditations in the Word of God, and especially in His Promises. Now when there is this warmth in the Heart, this is a glorifying God in the Fires. And let me add one thing more ! Then do we glorifie God in the Fires, when our Hands grow warm by the Fire, when we are more active in doing good. A Natu-

ral Man's fingers are frozen, he is cold and dead to any good Duty, and the best of God's Children are herein too cold also. But then ye glorifie God in the Fires, when ye are more active in doing good, when ye are a peculiar People zealous of good Works, when ye are fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, The Hypocrite is ever too hot, or too cold, if over-hot in one thing, he is over-cold in another; neither hot nor cold, but *lukewarm*, which is worse than either of the former, and less endured by Christ, (*Revel. 3. 16.*) but Zeal in the true Christian is as the Vital Spirits that never cease Motion or Being till he cease to be. Then do ye glorifie God in the Fires, when ye are quickned and enlarged to the good of others. It is the Nature of Fire to multiply in *infinitum*, till it hath reached to all that is combustible: And it is the Nature of true Zeal (as of Charity) to begin at home; but afterwards to extend it self to the utmost bounds set by God to that Holy Fire. And this is true of every true Member of Jesus Christ, (as well as of David the Type, and of Christ typified by him) which was exemplified in our Lord and Head, *The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up*, *Psalme 69. 9.* He whose Zeal reacheth not to the House of God, is but a Mongrel Zealot, resembling neither Christ His Pattern, nor any of His Party. The Zeal and Fervour that a Christian gets from the Fires of Affliction, is like the Coelestial Fire in its proper Sphere, that cannot be extinguished; and as a Water in a hot Bath, that keeps its heat whilst the Water there remains there (although open to the Air) as from an Internal and perpetual Cause: He is hot with others, not because others be so, but when others are not so; and the more because others are not so, growing hotter

hotter by the opposite that doth accost it, as Fire is more vehement by an Antiperistasis of the ambient Cold, as a Learned Man hath noted.

Now I beseech you of this City, and of this place, to consider these things, and lay them to your Hearts; examine whether ye have glorified God in the Fires or no, by such an answerableness as these Rules call for? Mark what the Prophet saith in a like case, *Psalms 66. O God, saith the Prophet, Thou hast proved us and tryed us, as Silver is tryed, verse 10, and verse 12. We went through Fire and Water, that is, Thou hast brought us through all manner of Evils: For all kinds of Afflictions in Scripture are understood by Fire and Water. And we presently find upon this a glorifying of God. I will go into thine House with Burnt-Offerings, I will pay thee my Vows which my Lips have uttered, and my Mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble: And verse 16. Come, and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul.*

Now to press you to this Duty, let me lay some Considerations before you.

1. Unless ye glorifie God in the Fires, ye do not answer God's end in kindling these Fires among you. Do you think that God kindled these Fires among you for nothing? If a Sparrow falls not to the ground without God's Providence, do ye think that God would kindle so many Fires in this City, and throw down so many Thousand Houses as He did in the great Conflagration for nothing? Mark what God saith, *Mal. 1. 10. Who is there even among you that would shut the Doors for nought? Neither*



*do ye kindle Fire upon mine Altar for nought.* The Words may be understood two ways in reference to their Ceremonial Worship. Ye do not kindle a Fire upon mine Altar for nought: That is; every Man had some end that did it, which he propounded to himself in the doing of it. He brought a Sacrifice to offer. Secondly, He did it not for nought, that is, without any profit. He should have that which should answer his Charge, answer the kindling of that Fire. Now as Men shall not kindle a Fire for nought, so God will not kindle a Fire in your Houses for nought: Ye defeat God of His End, when ye glorifie not God in the Fires.

2. If ye glorifie God in the Fires, these very Fires shall be your Glory: Then these Fires are Blessings, when we can bless and glorifie God for them. It changeth the Nature of these Fires, it turneth Evil into Good, when we can glorifie God in these Fires: When the Cross sits heavy upon our backs, and the Fire of Affliction is ready to consume us, yet if we can glorifie God, and bless Him from the Heart for them, it will be as a Crown of Glory upon our Heads.

3. To glorifie God in the Fire of Affliction, is in some degree a higher Dignity than God puts upon the Angels in Heaven. The Angels only glorifie God in a way of Service; it is only the Saints on Earth that glorifie Him in a way of suffering.

4. If ye do not glorifie God in the Fires that He hath kindled among you, you do but put God upon kindling new Fires among you: If one be not big enough, He can  
make



make more, and bigger; and if one will not do it, another shall, He will fetch up His Glory one way or other, and ye do but make more combustible matter for the Judgment of God, if ye do not yield Him His ends in kindling so many Fires among you. *Josephus* tells us, That *Titus* the Son of *Vespasian* the *Roman* Emperour was very unwilling to destroy the Temple in *Jerusalem*, that he laboured to quench the Flame after it was set on fire, and suffered some prejudice in his Wars about it; it was done *divino*

*Joseph. de bello Judaico.*

*quodam impetu*, by a certain Divine Stroke, as the same Author observeth. But *Joseph* being a *Jew*, was ignorant of the main cause of the Destruction of the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*, *scil.* their Rejecting and Murthering the Son of God.

5. Suppose God kindle no more Fires, and bring no more such a Judgment upon you, yet be ye assured of this, that they who glorifie not God in the Fires, shall find God Himself to be a Fire unto them, (*Heb. 12. 29.*) Our God, saith the Apostle, is a consuming Fire. Not, that He will consume His People, He will consume their Dross only: But to His Enemies He will be a consuming Fire, He will consume them for ever. Ye that are Wicked and Ungodly, though ye walk all your days in the warm Sun, yet God will be a consuming Fire to you at last: Who would set Briars and Thorns against me in Battel, saith the Lord, I would go thorough them, I would burn them together, *Psalms 27. 4.* Mark what the Prophet saith, *Isa. 33. 14.* The Sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprized the Hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring Fire? Who among us shall dwell with Everlasting Burnings? God is before His own People as a Fire, but

but they can come near to it, and not be burnt: But the Hypocrite trembleth at it, saying, *Who shall dwell with devouring Fire?* It is a sad thing to have Burnings in your Dwellings that last but a few Hours; how woful is it then to dwell with Everlasting Burnings? Now God will be a Devouring Fire, and Everlasting Burnings to all them that are drossy, and continue in Sin.

Therefore I beseech you, study to put this Exhortation in my Text in Practice, *viz.* To glorifie God in the Fires. The Apostle saith, *In every thing give thanks*: Let God do what He will with His People, they have cause in every thing to glorifie Him. Therefore

*Tho. de Kempis de imitat. Christi. l. 1, 3. c. 5.*

*Thomas de Kempis* speaks excellently in his Book of the Imitation of Christ, I give Thee hearty thanks O Lord my God, that Thou hast not spared my faults, but hast visited me with thy Stripes for them: Thy Correction shall Instruct me, and Thy Rod shall Tutor me unto Salvation. *Gregory* speaks sweetly to this purpose. Who can be unthankful even for Blows, when as He went not out of the World without Stripes, who came into and lived in it without Faults? Therefore He is of a right Judgment, who not only glorifieth God in Prosperity, but also who blesteth His Name for Calamities: If thou shalt by Thanksgiving in Adversity gain the Peace of God with the Things which thou hast lost shall be restored with Multiplication, and moreover Eternal Joys for the short time of thy Sorrow, shall be surely added. Thanks must be given to a Father for his Scourges and severest Discipline; for the Blows of a Father are better than the Kisses of an Enemy. This is the very Will of God to give Thanks always. In every thing to give Thanks, argues a Soul  
rightly

rightly Instructed. Hast thou suffered any Loss, any Evil ; if thou wilt, it is no Evil, give Thanks to God, and glorifie Him, and then thou hast turned the Evil into Good. Say thou also as *Job*, when he had lost all, *The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* *Job* then did more deeply wound the Devil, when being stript out of all, he gave Thanks to God, than if he had distributed all to the Poor and Needy : For it is much more to be stript of all, and to bear it patiently and thankfully, than for a Rich Man to give Alms, as it here hapned to Righteous *Job*. Hath the Fire taken hold upon your Houses, and turned any of you out of your Dwellings, and consumed your whole Substance, Remember the Sufferings and Losses of *Job*. Give Thanks to God, who could (though He did not) have hindred that Mischance, and thou shalt be sure to receive as equal a Reward, as if thou hadst put all into the Bosom of the Indigent. Therefore let us not rest in this, that we bear Afflictions, and suffer Losses, but labour to bring our Hearts to glorifie God in the Fires of Affliction.

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